

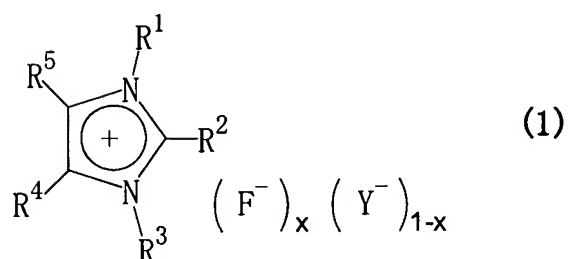
Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-13. (Cancelled).

14. (Original) An imidazolium salt of the formula (1):



wherein R¹ and R³ are the same or different, and represent an optionally substituted alkyl group,

R², R⁴ and R⁵ are the same or different, and represent a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted alkyl group, x satisfies 0<x<1, and

Y⁻ represents a monovalent anion other than a fluoride ion.

15. (Currently Amended) The imidazolium salt according to claim [[13]] 14, wherein the monovalent anion represented by Y⁻ is a halide ion, a borate ion, a phosphate ion, an antimonate ion, a sulfonate ion, a nitrate ion, a carbonate ion, a carboxylate ion or an amide ion.

16. (Cancelled).

17. (Currently Amended) The imidazolium salt according to claim [[13]] 14, wherein X satisfies 0.4<X<0.9.

18.-21. (Cancelled).